

REMARKS

SUMMARY

The subject application sets forth claims 1-21 with claims 1, 3 and 9 being independent claims. Claims 9-21 previously have been identified as allowable in the October 2, 2009 Office Action. Presently amended independent claims 1 and 3 as well as dependent claims 2 and 4-8 are patentable over the combination of U.S. Patent Nos. 6,600,326 (Weiss) and 6,966,219 (Starinshak), in keeping with the present amendments and the distinguishing remarks set forth below. As such, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all presently pending claims 1-21.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants note with appreciation that original claims 9-21 were indicated as having allowable subject matter. Based on the present amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request further acknowledgement of allowance of claims 1-8.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Original claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,600,326 (Weiss) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,966,219 (Starinshak). In light of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that presently amended claims 1-8 are patentable over such combination of references.

CLAIMS 3-5:

Present claims 3, 4 and 5 are directed to certain exemplary aspects of the present technology, a portion of which is shown in the example of Figs. 2 and 2a. Figs. 2 and 2a generally illustrate one exemplary embodiment for providing physical protection of a tire

electronics device by employing an insulative wall either partially or completely surrounding a tire electronics device mounted on a tire surface. As shown in Figs. 2 and 2a, a tire electronics device 94 is secured to an inside surface 12 of tire 10. In this embodiment, a semicircular insulative protective structure taking the form of a wall 200 is positioned perpendicular to inside tire surface 12 to provide physical protection for tire electronics device 94 from contact by wires 310. The protective wall 200 at least partially surrounds tire electronics device 94 and may, by way of optional wall portion 210 completely surround the tire electronics device 94.

Currently amended independent claim 3 includes some of the features described above relative to Figs. 2 and 2a. As described in independent claim 3, a method for preventing damage to tire electronics during tire inspection includes in relevant part, steps of “providing a tire containing at least one tire electronics device mounted on a surface of the tire;” and “providing an insulative wall perpendicular to the tire surface and in proximity to the at least one tire electronics device such that contact with the tire electronics device by the end of the conductive wire configured for contact with the tire is inhibited” (emphasis added).

Neither Weiss nor Starinshak discloses a step of “providing a tire containing at least one tire electronics device mounted on a surface of the tire” as set forth in claim 3. Numbered page 2 of the October 2, 2009 Office Action acknowledges that “Weiss does not specifically disclose that the tire contains at least one tire electronics device.” Starinshak, although disclosing an electronics package 34, does not mount the electronics package 34 to a surface of the tire. Instead, electronics package 34 is positioned within a base housing 38 having a cylindrical configuration similar to antenna tube 36. The base housing 38, antenna tube 36 and associated components are then either embedded/deployed within a tire 12 (such as shown in Fig. 1 of Starinshak) or attached to a tire as described in col. 4, lines 20-27. Since neither cited reference

discloses mounting a tire electronics device on a surface of the tire, claim 3 is patentable for at least this reason.

Neither Weiss nor Starinshak discloses a step of “providing an insulative wall perpendicular to the tire surface and in proximity to the at least one tire electronics device such that contact with the tire electronics device by the end of the conductive wire configured for contact with the tire is inhibited,” as also set forth in current independent claim 3. Numbered page 2 of the October 2, 2009 Office Action acknowledges that Weiss does not specifically provide a physical barrier in proximity to a tire electronics device. Starinshak does not disclose an insulative wall, much less one that is configured perpendicular to the tire surface on which a tire electronics device is mounted. Since neither cited reference discloses such feature of claim 3, claim 3 is further patentable over such references.

Because claim 3 is patentable over Weiss and Starinshak either singularly or in combination, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 4 and 5 further describe and limit the insulative wall set forth in claim 3. Because claim 3 is allowable over the combination of Weiss and Starinshak, claims 4 and 5 should also be allowed. Applicants respectfully request acknowledgement of the same.

CLAIMS 1-2 and 6-8:

Present claims 1-2 and 6-8 are directed to certain exemplary aspects of the present technology, a portion of which is shown in the example of Figs. 5 and 5a. Figs. 5 and 5a generally illustrate another exemplary embodiment for providing physical protection of a tire electronics device by employing a cover 500 as a physical barrier over the tire electronics device 94, for example one formed of either an insulative, conductive or resistive material.

Currently amended independent claim 1 as well as respective dependent claims 2 and 6-8 include some of the features described above relative to Figs. 5 and 5a. As described in independent claim 1, a method for preventing damage to tire electronics during tire inspection includes in relevant part, steps of “providing a tire containing at least one tire electronics device mounted on a surface of the tire;” and “providing a physical barrier comprising a covering in proximity to the at least one tire electronics device and applied over the tire electronics device, whereby damage to the tire electronics from effects of the high-voltage source is avoided” (emphasis added).

Neither Weiss nor Starinshak discloses a step of “providing a tire containing at least one tire electronics device mounted on a surface of the tire” as set forth in claim 1. Numbered page 2 of the October 2, 2009 Office Action acknowledges that “Weiss does not specifically disclose that the tire contains at least one tire electronics device.” Starinshak, although disclosing an electronics package 34, does not mount the electronics package 34 to a surface of the tire. Instead electronics package 34 is positioned within a base housing 38 having a cylindrical configuration similar to antenna tube 36. The base housing 38, antenna tube 36, and associated components are then either embedded/deployed within a tire 12 (such as shown in Fig. 1 of Starinshak) or attached to a tire as described in col. 4, lines 20-27. Since neither cited reference discloses mounting a tire electronics device on a surface of the tire, claim 1 is patentable over such references for at least this reason.

Neither Weiss nor Starinshak discloses a step after mounting the tire electronics device of then covering the tire electronics with a physical barrier. Weiss does not disclose such feature, as acknowledged on numbered page 2 of the October 2, 2009 Office Action. Starinshak does not disclose such feature, because the electronics package 34 is not first mounted to a tire surface

then covered. In contrast, the electronics package 34 of Starinshak is positioned relative to a base housing 38, which is connected to the annular antenna tube 36 and then either embedded within the tire itself or later attached to the tire. In either option, there is not a cover formed over the electronics package 34. Regardless of whether the assembly of the antenna tube 36 and other components in Starinshak are embedded within the tire or attached post-manufacture, any materials that could be considered as protective for the electronics package 34 are provided pre-attachment, not after mounting as set forth in claim 1. Since neither cited reference discloses such particular aspects of the method set forth in claim 1, claim 1 is further patentable over such references.

Because claim 1 is patentable over Weiss and Starinshak either singularly or in combination, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 2 and 6-8 further describe and limit the method set forth in claim 1. Because claim 1 is allowable over the combination of Weiss and Starinshak, dependent claims 2 and 6-8 should also be allowed. Applicants respectfully request acknowledgement of the same.

CONCLUSION:

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable and that the application is in a condition for allowance. Review and favorable action thereon is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience should the Examiner have any questions concerning this matter or require any additional information.

A fee for a one-month extension of time is submitted with this amendment. If any additional fee or extension of time is required to obtain the entry of this response, the

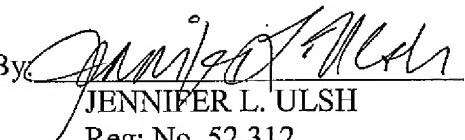
Appl. No. 10/581,693
Response Dated January 21, 2010
Reply to Office Action of October 2, 2009

undersigned hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant any necessary time and extension and authorize its charging deposit account no. 04-1403 for any such fee not submitted herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

DORITY & MANNING, P.A.

DATE: 1/21/2010

By 
JENNIFER L. ULSH
Reg. No. 52,312
P.O. Box 1449
Greenville, SC 29602-1449
(864) 271-1592